

REMARKS

The Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for reviewing the present application and the Office Action of December 12, 2007. Please note that Applicant has cancelled claims 1-13, and 19-28, claims 14 -18 have been amended and new claims 29-35 have been added. Support for the new claims can be found in Figs. 7A-7C and the accompanying text at page 13 line 5 to page 16 line 2. Additionally, Applicant has amended the priority paragraph, so that the presently pending claims now only claim priority back to the provisional application filed on June 12, 2002. Claims 14-18, and 29-35 are currently pending.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

The Office Action objected to claims 1 and 13. Claims 1 and 13 have been cancelled and therefore the objections are moot.

35 U.S.C. §103

The office action has rejected claims 1-3, 7, 14, 27 and 28 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kassalty (US 5,157,491) in view of Stifle (US 4,633,462). Applicants note that claims 1-3, 7, 27 and 28 have been cancelled.

Claim 14 is still pending. Claim 14 has been amended to better claim the subject matter of the invention. Claim 14 is directed to a system for multi-media transmission of data in a cable television network. The system includes a multimedia device and a set-top box. In this system, the set-top box establishes an interactive session with a processor located at the headend of a cable television system by negotiating a connection. The multimedia device is coupled to the set-top box. The multi-media device receives as input a multimedia signal. The multimedia device encodes and packetizes the multimedia signal. The header of the packets need only contain information as to the source of the content and to packet order. The destination address is not provided in the packet header. The multimedia device outputs the multimedia signal to the set-top box and the set-top box forwards the multimedia signal to the processor at the headend based upon the negotiated communication.

None of the prior art references teach a multimedia device that receives in a multimedia signal and packetizes the signal including only information as to source and to packet order. The destination address is maintained through a negotiated connection in the present invention by a secondary device, the set-top box.

U.S. Patent 5,157,491 to Kassalty is directed to a system for broadcasting and teleconferencing. Fig. 1 shows a process for processing signals to be transmitted and a process for receiving signals. See Col. 10 lines 15-21. The embodiment that is shown in Fig. 8 and explained in the method of Fig. 6 is a variant of the transmitter and receiver system shown in Fig. 1 and teaches that channel selection is fed back to the transmitter from the receiver. Thus, only the desired channels are transmitted. See Col. 12 line 54 – Col. 13 line 3.

As indicated by the office action, the Kassalty patent does not teach that the multimedia data is provided to a head end of a cable television system. Further, Kassalty does not teach that the set-top box negotiates a connection with an assigned processor at the headend. Further, Kassalty lacks that the multimedia signal is sent to the cable headend via the negotiated connection

The Stifle patent is directed to multiple access communication on a CATV reverse channel. The Stifle patent does teach bidirectional communication between a headend and a set-top box, however Stifle, like Kassalty fails to disclose the negotiation of a connection between an assigned processor and a set-top box for an interactive session. Stifle does not include a processor that is assigned for the purpose of an interactive session. Stifle merely shows a computer system 30 and not a plurality of processors for assignment. Further, the Stifle patent fails to teach that a multimedia device communicates with an assigned processor without knowing the destination address of the assigned processor wherein the negotiated communication for the interactive session is used to direct the multimedia signal from the set-top box to the assigned processor as required by independent claim 14.

As a result, the art of record does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of the independent claim 14. Dependent claims 16-18 are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Independent claims 29 and 30 are drawn to a system and method for video conferencing. In these claims as in independent claim 14, a set-top box is capable of establishing an interactive session with an assigned processor at the cable headend. In response, the assigned processor begins running video conferencing software. These limitations are not present in either of the two references. Further, a destination address is provided to the assigned processor and the assigned processor directs communications between the set-top box and the destination address without either the multimedia device or the set-top box needing to know the destination or transmitting packet information that contains information of the destination to the assigned processor.

For at least these reasons claims independent 29 and 30 are also allowable over the art of record. Dependent claims 31-35 each dependent from claim 30 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

It is believed that all of the claim rejections have been addressed and that the application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the claims and issuance of a notice of allowance are respectfully requested.

If any matter arises which may expedite issuance of a notice of allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned, at the telephone number given below.

It is believed that no extension of time is required for this application. If this is incorrect, please charge deposit account 19-4972 for any extension. If any additional fees are required for the timely consideration of this application, please charge deposit account number 19-4972.

Respectfully submitted,

/John J. Stickevers, #39,387/
John J. Stickevers
Registration No. 39,387
Attorney for Applicant

BROMBERG & SUNSTEIN LLP
125 Summer Street
Boston MA 02110-1618
Tel: 617 443 9292 Fax: 617 443 0004
01436/00154 828095.1